

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 5. This sheet, which includes figures 4-5, replaces the original sheet including Figures 4-5. In Figure 5, periphery of the coating blanket or edges 56, and 58 are clarified by changing the leader line destination to distinguish the periphery or edges from the slits 54. New reference numeral 100 is added to clarify "coating blanket" as the finished cut product of "coating blanket material 23." Reference numeral 24 is deleted.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2 and 5 are amended. Amendments were made to correct informalities in the claims. Support for this amendment is found throughout the specification and drawings, for example, at page 8, lines 5-25. No new matter has been added.

1. Drawing Objections

The drawings were objected to for several reasons. Figure 5 has been revised and the following remarks are submitted to clarify the drawings.

a. Coating Blanket versus Coating Blanket Material The “coating blanket” is shown in Figure 5 under new reference numeral 100. The “coating blanket” 100 is the finished cut product of the “coating blanket material.” As shown in the specification under paragraphs [0025] and [0026], upon completion of the cutting operation, the coating blanket material is then removed from the cutting apparatus 10, and the coating blanket separated along the intermittent slits in the first and second pairs of opposed lateral edges.

The “coating blanket material” is shown in Figures 2 and 5 under reference numeral 23. The coating blanket material as shown in FIG. 2, includes a first layer of flexible material 24 and a carrier layer 30 bonded together forming a laminate. See paragraph [0019]

b. Tip Portion of Knife not Tip Portion Sensor In dependent claim 2, the tip portion is directed to the tip portion of the knife as described, for example, in paragraphs [0022] and [0023]. The sensing of the tip portion is sensed by either sensors on or adjacent to reference surface 21 or by an optical encoder positioned in the cutting head 18 of the knife. See paragraphs [0011] and [0023].

The tip portion of the knife is shown in Figures 1 and 4 under reference numeral 22.

c. Adjusting the Tip Portion not Adjusting Means Also in dependent claim 2, the adjusting is directed to adjusting the tip portion of the knife as described, for example, in paragraph [0023] that states in part that the location of the knife can be adjusted to ensure that the proper cuts are made in the coating blanket. Paragraph [0023] explains how this adjusting is accomplished by controller 20 shown in Figure 1.

Clearly dependent claim 2 does not claim an “adjusting means” as defined under 35 USC. §112 paragraph 6, but rather claims a method that includes adjusting the location of the tip portion of the knife.

d. Pressure Sensor In dependent claim 4, also finds support in paragraph [0023] that states in part alternatively, the depth at which the knife cuts can be controlled during a cutting operation via the pressure exerted on or against the knife. In this case, a pressure sensor can be positioned in the cutter head or elsewhere. The pressure sensor inside the cutter head is shown by showing cutting head reference numeral 18 in Figures 1 and 4.

e. Adjusting the Pressure not Pressure Adjusting Means Also in dependent claim 4, paragraph [0023] explains how this adjusting is accomplished by controller 20 shown in Figure 1. Clearly dependent claim 4 does not claim a “pressure adjusting means” as defined under 35 USC. §112 paragraph 6, but rather claim a method that includes adjusting the pressure exerted on or against the knife to control the depth which the knife cuts. See paragraph [0023].

2. Drawing Objections Concerning Periphery of Coating Blanket

Figure 5 is amended by changing the leader lines to arrows to indicate the periphery or opposing edges denoted by reference numerals 56 and 58. The opposing edges 56 and 58 define the periphery of the coating blanket. Support is found in paragraphs [0012] and [0025].

As shown in FIG. 5, the carrier layer is cut to conform to the desired peripheral size and shape of the finished coating blanket. Since the carrier layer 30 is somewhat rigid, the knife cuts through it by way of multiple passes over the same line of cut. In order to prevent the coating blanket from separating from the coating blanket material, rather than cutting a sustained line, intermittent slits 54 are cut into the carrier layer, providing for easy separation of the coating blanket from the coating blanket material upon removal from the cutting apparatus 10. These intermittent slits 54 are cut around the periphery of the coating blanket in a particular order.

Initially, a first pair of opposed lateral edges 56 that are spaced apart relative to one another and extend approximately perpendicular to a longitudinal axis defined by the cutting apparatus roller are cut. Upon completion of the cutting operation, with respect to the first pair of lateral edges 56, a second pair of lateral edges 58, which together with the first pair of lateral edges coact to define the periphery of the coating blanket. See paragraph [0025]

3. Objections to the Specification

The specification has been amended to include new reference numeral 100 to denote the coating blanket as described above. Also, as explained above is a description of the flexible material and carrier material.

Applicants contend that cutting depth control, evaluation of knife wear and cutting of the flexible and carrier layers are clearly set forth in the specification, for example at paragraphs [0022] through [0025].

4.-8 Claim Rejections under 35 USC 112

The claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 USC §112 paragraph 1 as containing subject matter which is not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art, and under 35 USC §112, paragraph 2 as being indefinite.

Amendments are made to claims 1, 2, and 5 to correct informalities of antecedent basis and redundancy of claim language. The applicants contend that the above explanation of claim terms, amendments to the specification, and drawings overcome the above rejections.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as currently pending are patentable and in condition for allowance.

If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees required for the extension of time or consideration of this Amendment on the merits to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 4758-4014US1.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 1, 2005

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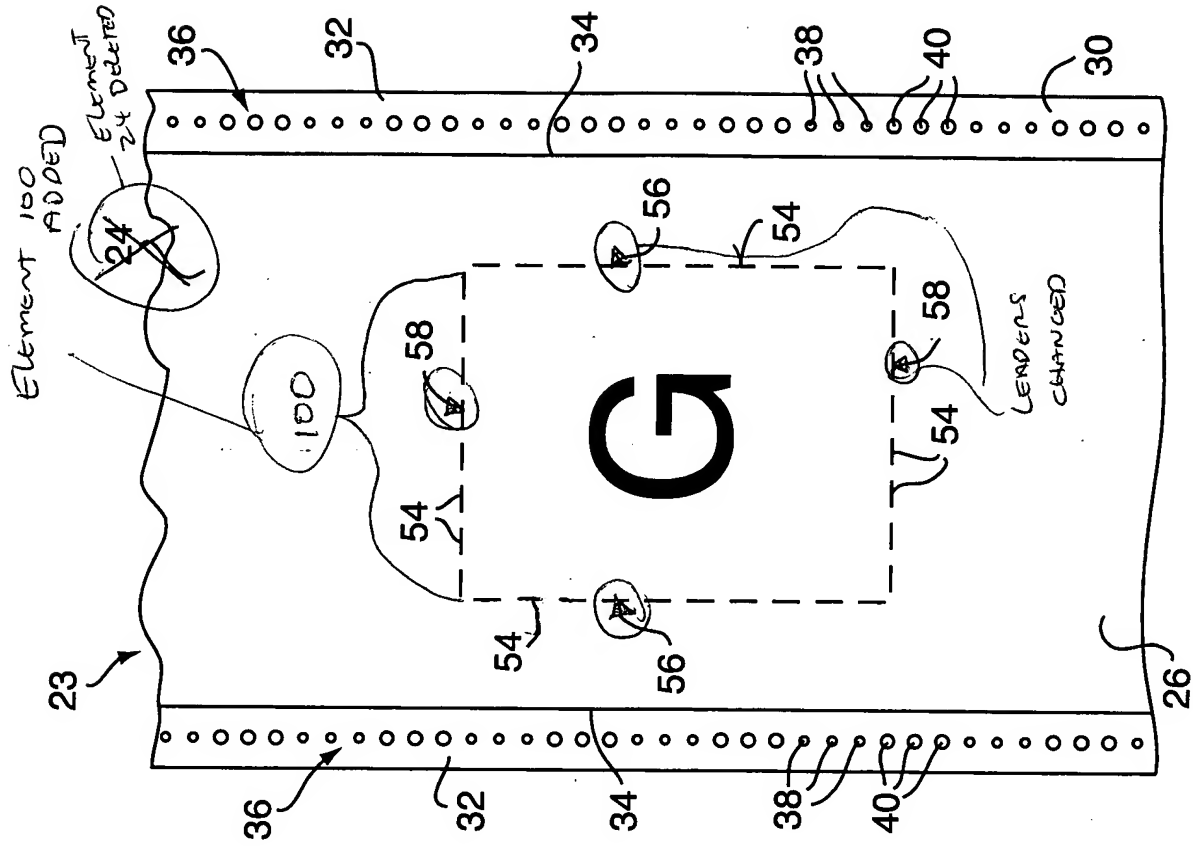


FIG. 5

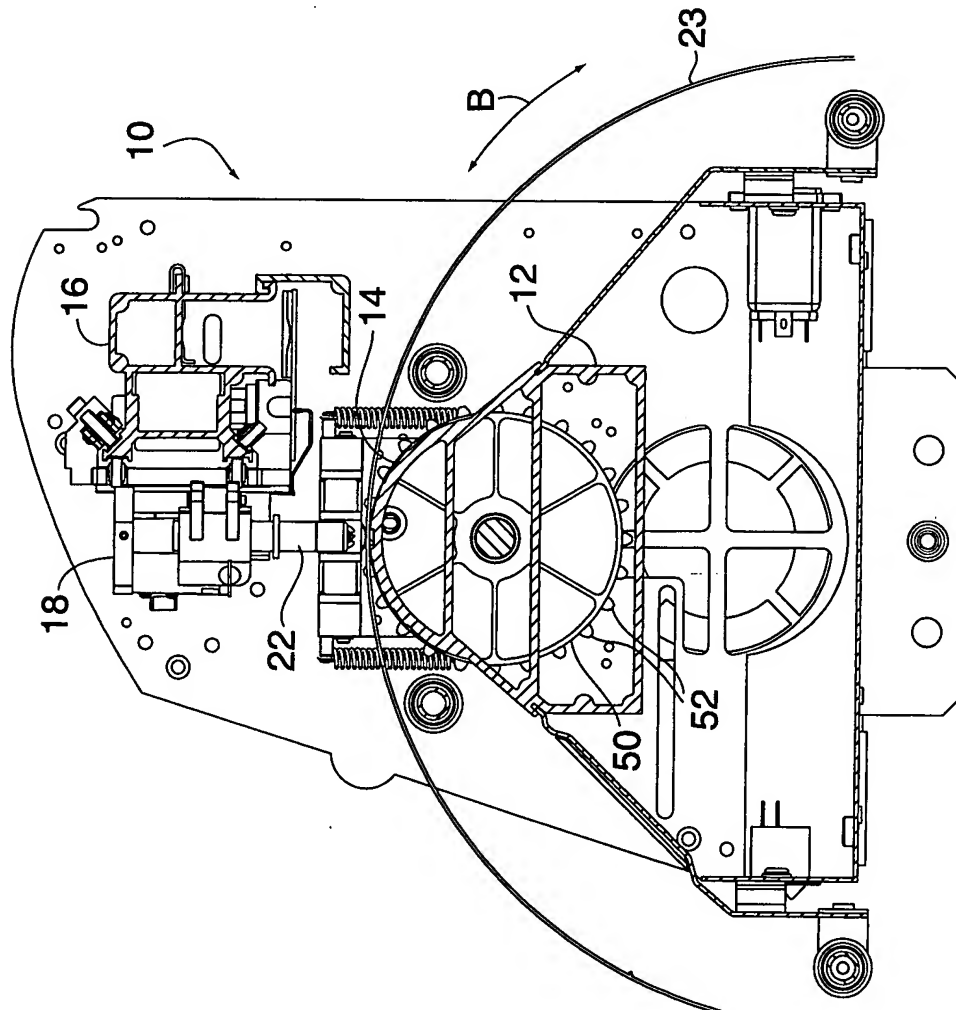


FIG. 4